

Prayer is the Answer - Ephesians 6:18-24 - September 23rd, 2018

- I've titled today's teaching, "Prayer is the Answer."
 - The reason being is that prayer is the answer to how we put the armor on, and prayer is the answer to how we live victoriously.
 - Prayer is the answer to our enduring and persevering through the trials in life, particularly when it comes to spiritual warfare.
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- The question I ask of myself is this, would I want to know how someone had persevered through very difficult circumstances?
 - Especially if I was going through something similar to what they had experienced, and survived, even thrived in the midst of.
 - In other words, I would want to know what their secret was so I too could get through what I'm going through as they had done.
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- Such is the case here with the Apostle Paul who is chained to a Roman guard wearing his full armor, encouraging them to pray.
 - This because, Paul's secret was his prayer life, as evidenced by him not asking for prayer to be released from Roman custody.
 - Instead, he's encouraging them to pray, and keep on praying, and he's even asking them to pray that he is bold and fearless.
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- I would suggest that this is why the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray instead of how to preach, or do miracles.
 - In other words, they saw the power that Jesus had, the miracles that Jesus performed and they knew what the source of it was.
 - Namely, that of prayer; having watched Jesus pray to the Father in every situation that was before Him, which was His source.
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- Enter our text where in verse 18, we're told to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and specific requests.
 - Then in verses 19-20, Paul asks that they pray for him, specifically that he be given a fearless boldness to preach the gospel.
 - In verses 21-23 he ends the letter by saying Tychicus will give them the details concerning how he's doing to encourage them.
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- One would think that knowing all of this about prayer, would somehow translate into Christians continually turning to prayer.
 - However, the truth of the matter is that for many a Christian, prayer has sadly become the last resort instead of a first response.
 - This is exactly what the enemy does and why the enemy does it; he knows that a prayerless Christian is a defeated Christian.
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- I'll take it a step further and submit that not only is a prayerless Christian a defeated Christian but a powerless Christian as well.
 - It's for this reason that Paul says to pray in the Spirit because when we pray in the Spirit, we will receive the power of the Spirit.
 - It's important to understand what praying in the Spirit is, and how praying in the Spirit works, and the answer to that is twofold.
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- First, to pray in the Spirit is to pray in a prayer language, which is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that of praying in tongues.
 - While I don't wish to get into the debate about tongues today, I do need to at the very least mention that the gifts are for today.
 - Secondly to pray in the Spirit is to pray directed by the Spirit in the sense that the Holy Spirit impresses upon your heart to pray.
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- 1 Corinthians 14:14-15 - 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.
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- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
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- If you were to ask me what I thought one of the main reasons we don't pray continually, I believe it's because of how we see it.
 - By that I mean, we see prayer as a got to and not a get to, which to me explains why it is that Christians see prayer as a chore.
 - I think if we're honest with ourselves, we would all have to admit that prayer is hard in the natural, in that it's in the supernatural.
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- One of the things I'm learning about my prayer life personally, is God doesn't demand I pray, rather, He will prompt me to pray.
 - He does this by bringing me to the end of myself and resources in the realm of the natural, so I turn to Him in the supernatural.
 - It's only when I realize that, for me, the situation is so impossible, that I'll go to the Lord as the One that can do the impossible.
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- When in Jesus was asked about the impossibility of anyone being saved, his response in Matthew 19:26 was, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
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- When Mary questioned the angel of the Lord who told her that she would give birth as a virgin to the Savior of the world, he told her in Luke 1:37, "with God nothing will be impossible."
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- In Genesis 18, we're told that Sarah laughed after Abraham was told that she would give birth to a son at 90-years of age, well passed childbearing age. Then in Genesis 18:14 Abraham is asked the rhetorical question of, "Is anything too hard for the Lord."
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- Here's the bottom line in closing, it may very well be that God has allowed that impossible situation in your life for this reason.
 - He wants for you to see Him do that which He may not have otherwise done had the situation not been as impossible as it was.
 - By doing it in this way, our faith grows and goes off the charts because if God can do that then there's nothing too hard for Him.